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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/664,482	09/17/2003	Richard A. Tatina	P03,0313	4369
26574	7590	01/31/2006	EXAMINER	
SCHIFF HARDIN, LLP PATENT DEPARTMENT 6600 SEARS TOWER CHICAGO, IL 60606-6473			GORDON, STEPHEN T	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3612	

DATE MAILED: 01/31/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/664,482	Applicant(s) TATINA, RICHARD A.	
	Examiner Stephen Gordon	Art Unit 3612	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 December 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 20-26 and 28-31 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 20, 23 and 24 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 21, 22, 26 and 28-31 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 25 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 September 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 25-26 are objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 25, the colon in line 11 should be a semicolon.

Appropriate correction is required.

2. Claims 21-22, 26, and 28-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 21, “the bottom containers” bridging lines 17-18 lacks clear antecedent basis and should apparently be –the lower containers—as best understood. Additionally, “the respective top container” on line 18 lacks clear antecedent basis and should apparently be –the respective upper container—as best understood. Note similar confusing term in line 20.

Claim 22, lines 3-4 are somewhat confusing, and “adjacent” in line 3 could be written as –adjacent ones of said—to clarify the claim in this regard as best understood.

Claim 26, “numbers” in line 4 is confusing and should apparently be –members—as best understood.

Claim 28 as newly amended, “the connectors” in line 12 lacks clear antecedent basis and is generally very confusing as connectors per se are recited previously at lines 4 and 10-11. On lines 13-14, “the respective two lower containers” lacks clear antecedent

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basis and is generally very confusing. Which two containers does this refer to? Finally, "the connectors" in line 15 lacks clear antecedent basis and is generally very confusing as connectors per se are recited previously at lines 4 and 10-11.

Regarding new claim 29, "one" in line 2 should apparently be written as –one of said spacers—for added clarity. Additionally, "other" in line 3 should apparently be written as –other one of said spacers—for added clarity.

3. The failure to apply the prior art to claims 28-31 should not be construed as an indication of allowable subject matter. Because these claims so seriously fail to meet the requirements of 35USC112-2nd paragraph for the reasons stated above, it is not possible to apply the prior art to the claims in deciding patentability without disregarding portions of the express wording of the claims and thus resorting to speculation and conjecture as to the invention defined therein. See Ex parte Lyell, 17USPQ2d 1548, 1552.

4. Claims 21-22 and 26 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

5. Claim 25 is objected to for the minor informality noted above but is otherwise allowable.

6. Claims 20 and 23-24 are allowed.

7. Applicant's arguments with respect to the rejected claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

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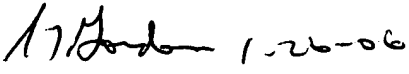
8. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stephen Gordon whose telephone number is (571) 272-6661. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Stephen Gordon
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3612

stg